

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TAGS: OECD, ETRD
SUBJECT: DECEMBER 22 OECD COUNCIL MEETING: TRADE
MEASURES - SPAIN, CANADA, AND TRADE PLEDGE
IMPLICATIONS

ON DECEMBER 22, THE OECD COUNCIL CONTINUED THE DISCUS-
SION OF RESTRICTIVE TRADE ACTIONS BEGUN ON DECEMBER 17,
WHEN ITALIAN MEASURES WERE DISCUSSED (SEPTTEL-NOTAL).
BRIEF STATEMENTS ON THE SPANISH MEASURES WERE MADE BY
EC, SWEDEN, AND US. AMONG THE POINTS INCLUDED WERE
UNDERSTANDING OF REASONS FOR SPANISH ACTIONS, CONCERN
AT TRADE PLEDGE IMPLICATIONS, AND HOPE THESE MEASURES
WOULD REMAIN TEMPORARY AND WOULD BE LIFTED NO LATER
THAN PRESENTLY SCHEDULED. IN RESPONSE, SPAIN EXPLAINED
ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES AND REPEATED THAT ACTIONS WERE
INTENDED AS TEMPORARY RESPONSE TO THESE DIFFICULTIES.

CANADIAN RESTRICTIONS ON TEXTILE IMPORTS WERE DISCUSSED
AT EC REQUEST. EC REFERRED TO EXTENSIVE NATURE OF
THESE RESTRICTIONS, SAID THEY POSED SERIOUS PROBLEM
FOR OTHERS, RISKED CAUSING A SNOWBALLING EFFECT OF
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INTERNATIONAL RESTRICTIONS, AND EXPRESSED REGRET AT
CANADA'S ACTIONS. SIMILAR POINT WAS MADE BY SWITZER-
LAND AND SWEDEN. CANADIANS RESPONDED BY CITING FIGURES
ON MAGNITUDE OF IMPORT SURGE AND SAID ACTIONS WERE
TAKEN UNDER GATT ARTICLE XIX.

IN SUMMARY, CHAIRMAN (VAN LENNEP) SAID COUNCIL WOULD
NOTE STATEMENTS AND EXPLANATIONS WHICH HAD BEEN MADE.
HE SAID THERE WAS MAJOR REASON FOR CONCERN AT GROWING
NUMBER OF TEMPORARY MEASURES TAKEN BECAUSE OF BALANCE
OF PAYMENTS OR SECTORAL PROBLEMS. SUCH DIFFICULTIES
EXISTED IN MANY OR ALL MEMBER COUNTRIES, AND PROSPECTS
FOR OVERCOMING THEM WERE NOT GOOD. THERE WAS A RISK
THAT MEASURES IN ONE COUNTRY WOULD ENCOURAGE
SIMILAR ACTIONS IN ANOTHER, A SITUATION THE TRADE
PLEDGE WAS EXPRESSLY DESIGNED TO COUNTER. HE SAID
GOVERNMENTS MIGHT KEEP SUCH CONSIDERATIONS IN MIND,
AND SUGGESTED THAT THE COUNCIL MIGHT AGREE ON A
GENERAL STATEMENT OF CONCERN ALONG THE FOREGOING LINES.
THERE WAS NO DISSENT OR COMMENT.
KATZ

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